

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

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AMCONSUL CURACAO

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

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AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 8669

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, VE, AIFLD

SUBJECT: PETROLEUM WORKERS MEET TO DISCUSS AN INTER-AMERICAN
FEDERATION

1. PETROLEUM WORKERS FROM VENEZUELA, MEXICO, CHILE, BOLIVIA,
PERU, COLOMBIA, ARGENTINA, ECUADOR, CURACAO AND ARUBA MET AT
LOS CARACAS SEASIDE RESORT JULY 6-9 TO DISCUSS THE ORGANIZATION
OF AN INTER-AMERICAN FEDERATION OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICAL AND
SIMILAR WORKERS OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE TRADE SECRETARIATE
TO REPLACE THE DEFUNCT INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PETROLEUM
AND CHEMICAL WORKERS (IFPCW). THE MEETING GENERATED
CONSIDERABLE ENTHUSIASM AMONG THOSE IN ATTENDANCE. IT WAS DECIDED
TO HOLD A SERIES OF REGIONAL SEMINARS IN 1977 (TWO IN LATIN
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AMERICA, ONE IN THE CARIBBEAN) TO FURTHER STUDY THE PROPOSAL
FOLLOWED BY A MEETING BY THE ORGANIZING COMMISSION
(VENEZUELA, MEXICO, CHILE, BOLIVIA, ARUBA, AND PERU,
WITH SEATS RESERVED FOR NON-PARTICIPANTS CANADA AND THE UNITED

STATES) WHICH WOULD DRAW UP THE BY-LAWS AND CONSTITUTION AND FINALLY A CONSTITUENT CONGRESS LATE IN 1977 IN EITHER BOGOTA OR CARACAS.

2. THE MEETING WAS CLOSED BY A LUNCHEON IN A CARACAS RESTAURANT HOSTED BY THE ENTIRE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE CONFEDERATION OF VENEZUELAN WORKERS (CIV) WITH THE MINISTER AND VICE MINISTER OF LABOR IN ATTENDANCE. THE LUNCHEON WAS NOTEWORTHY FOR THE ENTHUSIASM OF THE PARTICIPANTS AND A GOOD DEAL OF THIRD WORLD RHETORIC ON THE PART OF BOTH THE FOREIGN DELEGATES AND MINISTER OF LABOR MANZO GONZALEZ.

3. PRINCIPAL ORGANIZER OF THE LOS CARACAS MEETING WAS ARMANDO ARREVALO OF PERU OPERATING ON AN AIFLD SUB-GRANT TO THE GLASS BOTTLE BLOWERS ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA. ARREVALO DID A GOOD JOB IN ORGANIZING THIS MEETING ON VERY SHORT NOTICE AND ALL OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS WENT SMOOTHLY. HE WORKED WELL WITH HIS VENEZUELAN PETROLEUM WORKERS (FEDEPETROL) AND CTV HOSTS. THERE WAS NONE OF THE FRICTION ASSOCIATED WITH THE LAST DAYS OF THE IFPCW.

4. COMMENT: THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT THE POWERFUL PETROLEUM WORKERS UNIONS OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN LED BY THE CTV AND MEXICO (CTM) ARE EAGER TO FORM A NEW INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION TO REPLACE THE IFPCW. THERE IS ALSO LITTLE QUESTION THAT THEY WOULD CONSTITUTE A FORMIDABLE FORCE OF FREE AND DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNIONISTS WHICH WOULD HAVE AN IMPACT ON HEMISPHERE LABOR AFFAIRS OUT OF PROPORTION WITH THEIR NUMBERS GIVEN THE IMPORTANCE OF THEIR INDUSTRY AND THE SOPHISTICATION OF THEIR UNIONS. ALL PARTICIPANTS AGREED ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTICIPATION OF U.S. AND CANADIAN WORKERS IN A NEW HEMISPHERE ORGANIZATION. THIS EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT SUCH PARTICIPATION SHOULD WEIGHT HEAVILY IN FUTURE DECISIONS REGARDING USG FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE NEW FEDERATION. AN INTER-AMERICAN FEDERATION WITHOUT U.S. AND CANADIAN PARTICIPATION WOULD, IN OUR OPINION, ALMOST CONFIDENTIAL

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INEVITABLY DETERIORATE INTO A PLATFORM FOR THE THIRD WORLD AND AN INSTRUMENT OF TRADE UNION CONFRONTATION WITH THE INDUSTRIALIZED WORLD. ON THE OTHER HAND AN ORGANIZATION INCLUDING U.S. AND CANADIAN MEMBERS WOULD ACT AS AN IMPORTANT BRIDGE BETWEEN THE WORKERS OF THE INDUSTRIALIZED WORLD AND THOSE OF THE DEVELOPING NATIONS IN THE HEMISPHERE AS WELL AS ASSISTING THE SMALLER AND LESS WELL DEVELOPED GROUPS OF HEMISPHERE PETROLEUM WORKERS IN DEVELOPING STRONG, FREE AND DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNIONS. IN SHORT, U.S. AND CANADIAN PARTICIPATION ARE CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THIS ENTERPRISE. ASENCIO

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